

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, NEW BRITAIN AREA

March 4, 2022

Testimony in support of HB 5262 and SB 184

Honorable members of the GAO Committee:

The New Britain Area League of Women Voters urges your support of HB 5262 and SB 184. These similar bills are both concerned with absentee ballot voting.

The proposed changes to these bills were created in response to the pandemic, COVID 19. They address the problem that voters who are concerned about the danger to their health caused by COVID 19 be offered an absentee ballot as a valid voting method. The New Britain Area League supports these changes. Many in our community are elderly, and/or in compromised health. Despite the help of vaccinations, threat of serious infection remains for many in our community.

Last year we conducted elections allowing for these absentee ballot provisions. The track record established is that this change in no way compromised the validity of the process; instead, it opened up the process to many who might otherwise have not voted. The New Britain Area League supports continuing this direction.

The Senate and House bills both further recognize that COVID 19 is not the only communicable disease that dampens in-person voting, and removes the specification for that particular virus. They propose that a voter may vote absentee if they are unable to vote in-person due to illness or to disability. The specific illness or disability is not the business of the state and the voter's privacy is protected.

For these reasons, the New Britain Area League of Women voters supports both HB 5262 and SB 184 and urges your support.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the League Board by

Ann Speyer (13 Audubon St, New Britain, 860 839-0519)

Secretary, New Britain Area LWV